

EXHIBIT D

DECLARATION OF RINAT TUHVATSHIN

I, Rinat Tuhvatshin, declare as follows:

1. I am the Co-founder of Kloop Media Public Foundation, Kyrgyzstan, Co-founder of Koomar Media Public Foundation, Kyrgyzstan, and President of Fundacja Kloop Media Polska, Poland. The statements made in this declaration are based on my personal knowledge and the information made available to me pursuant to my duties as Co-founder of Kloop Media, Co-founder of Koomar Media and President of Kloop Media Polska. I will refer to these three legal entities as Kloop since they are managed by the same team.
2. Kloop is one of the last remaining independent investigative media organizations in Kyrgyzstan, known for exposing high-level corruption, abuse of power, and human rights violations.
3. Kloop Media Public Foundation was founded in 2006 with a commitment to expose corruption, defend press freedom, and train the next generation of journalists in Kyrgyzstan. From the beginning, Kloop's mission has been twofold. First, to conduct in-depth investigations into kleptocracy, human rights abuses, and political misconduct. Second, to provide young journalists with practical training and opportunities to produce real investigative work.
4. Kloop achieves its mission by combining investigative reporting, data-driven journalism, and journalism education. Kloop's journalists use advanced techniques, including data analysis, graph databases, and AI-assisted investigations, to uncover corruption networks and illicit financial flows. Kloop operates a school of journalism, offering both remote training and mentorship programs to students, many from underrepresented communities.
5. After its founding, Kloop quickly became a leading independent media organization in the country, known for its hard-hitting investigations into high-level corruption. Over the years, it has played a crucial role in exposing money laundering schemes, election fraud, and abuses of power, making it a key voice for transparency and accountability in Kyrgyzstan. Our investigations have uncovered multimillion-dollar money laundering schemes, exposed state-sanctioned kleptocracy, and held powerful figures accountable—work that has made us a primary target for government repression.
6. Over the years, authorities in Kyrgyzstan have intensified efforts to silence independent journalism, using arrests, deportations, fabricated criminal charges, and forced closures against journalists and media outlets, including Kloop. To prepare for possible government repercussions after one of our investigations, the team behind Kloop Media Foundation opened Koomar Media Public Foundation in Kyrgyzstan in 2017 and Kloop Media z.s. in Czech Republic in 2018. In 2022 we opened Kloop Media Polska in Poland, which replaced Kloop Media z.s. In 2023, the government moved to liquidate Kloop Media Public Foundation, a clear

indication of the increasingly authoritarian climate in the country. While the government eventually liquidated Kloop Media Public Foundation in 2024 after a prolonged court battle, we were able to continue our operations thanks to the existence of other legal entities inside and outside Kyrgyzstan.

7. To adapt to growing government repression, Kloop now operates as a hybrid organization. Its primary legal entity is registered in Poland (Fundacja Kloop Media Polska), ensuring legal and financial stability. A portion of our staff has been relocated abroad for security reasons (investigators, video hosts who appear in videos, upper management including myself), while at least 30 staff members remain in Kyrgyzstan, continuing less risky types of journalism work (with almost no investigative work or appearance in videos) and journalism training. The journalism school runs through remote learning and a distant internship program, ensuring young journalists can train safely, even in repressive conditions.

8. Thus, despite significant government pressure, legal threats, and attempts to shut it down, Kloop has continued to publish groundbreaking investigations and train new journalists, ensuring that independent media remains strong in Kyrgyzstan.

9. Kloop's work has earned multiple international awards, recognizing its contributions to press freedom and investigative journalism. These include the Sigma Award (2021) for data journalism work on femicide; and the Free Media Pioneer Award (2024) for advancing democracy and independent journalism.

Partnership with the National Endowment for Democracy

10. Kloop's partnership with the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) began in 2016. Initially, the grants ranged between \$50,000 and \$70,000. Over time, as Kloop's operations expanded and its impact grew, the partnership with NED broadened significantly. At different points in time NED has given funding to Kloop via Kloop Media Public Foundation, Kyrgyzstan, Koomar Media Public Foundation Kyrgyzstan, Kloop Media z.s., Czech Republic, and Fundacja Kloop Media Polska, Poland.

11. By 2020-2021, Kloop was managing two major NED-funded projects—one focused on journalism and the other on election observation. These projects marked a turning point, allowing Kloop to scale its investigative work and enhance its role in monitoring democratic processes.

12. Lately, on average, Kloop received \$400,000 per year from NED, which accounted for two-thirds of our current financing. The funds are normally disbursed in quarterly tranches (every 3 to 4 months), following the submission and approval of financial and project reports for the previous period.

13. This steady funding structure has been critical to Kloop's ability to operate independently, conduct high-impact investigations, and train the next generation of journalists in Kyrgyzstan.

14. Recently, however, Kloop has faced significant funding challenges due to the freeze in funding for NED from the U.S. government. Kloop has stopped receiving new funds from NED due to disruptions in their funding pipeline, which amounts to losing two thirds of our current financing.

15. Before the freeze, NED's board had already approved a new project for Kloop. The budget for the approved new project is \$300,000 for the next 10 months. The project was supposed to start in March 2025. However, that project is now on hold.

16. Kloop always tried to follow a multi-dependence strategy, ensuring that we would not cease to operate if we stopped working with one of the donors. However, several of our other donors that receive U.S. funding have also been affected, including the Prague Civil Society Center and Internews (an intermittent funding partner). Currently none of them funds Kloop anymore. The only donor left is the European Endowment for Democracy (EED).

17. While the European Endowment for Democracy (EED) remains a stable funding source, it only covers staff based in Kyrgyzstan and primarily journalists. This means that our team members in exile, including our investigative and management teams, are left without financial support. New-project funding from NED, which is now cut off, was going to be the only funding available for our staff who work in exile after limited funds (around \$2,500) run out in March 2025. In other words, without NED funding, we will have no money after March 2025 for our staff in Poland.

18. The recent halt in NED funding has therefore created a severe financial gap, directly threatening Kloop's core activities and long-term sustainability.

19. The loss of NED funding has already had serious consequences for Kloop's operations. These challenges are affecting both our ability to function in the present and our long-term sustainability, since we were counting on the new contract with NED, and had to downsize our team in anticipation of at minimum a delay in getting the funding.

20. So far, we have laid off several journalists, reducing our ability to produce news reports; cut a programmer, impacting our ability to develop and maintain key investigative tools; and let go of the manager of our journalism training program, affecting the coordination of future journalism education initiatives. These cuts have weakened our ability to conduct investigations, reduced our news output, slowed down innovation in our data-driven journalism work, and undercut our ability to train new journalists.

21. We are making severe cuts to our daily news coverage because of these lay-offs. Due to limited resources, we have shifted our focus away from daily news reporting and are prioritizing Kloop-exclusive investigations and in-depth materials. This means that important daily events in Kyrgyzstan that were previously covered by Kloop are now being left to other media, many of which engage in self-censorship.

22. The most severe and urgent risk is to our team members in exile. New-project funding from NED, which is now cut off, was going to be the only funds available for people who work in exile. If we fail to secure this funding, our team in exile—including our investigative unit, management team, and video production staff (most importantly video hosts who dare to show their faces)—will be left without salaries.

23. Given that the EED funding only covers journalists inside Kyrgyzstan, our entire investigative and management team abroad is at risk of losing their salaries. While we have limited funds remaining to support some of our exiled staff until the end of March 2025, after that we will have no way to support their salaries unless NED funding is resumed.

24. Without funding, our staff members face uncertainty about their immigration status. Many of our exiled team members hold residence permits in Poland that are directly tied to their employment with Kloop. If they lose their salaries, they could lose their residence permits, forcing them to either: (a) Return to Kyrgyzstan, where they face political persecution, arrest, or worse, or (b) Scramble to find alternative employment in Poland, which may not be in journalism. If neither of these options works, they may be forced to apply for refugee status, which is an uncertain and undesirable solution that could take years to resolve.

25. If staff were forced to return to Kyrgyzstan, they would face immediate threats to their safety. The recent imprisonment of Temirov Live journalists, along with the deportation of Bolot Temirov and the jailing of critics under vague extremism laws, demonstrates the extreme risks our journalists, video hosts, and investigative team would face if they were forced to return. Independent reporters in Kyrgyzstan are routinely surveilled, detained, and prosecuted on fabricated charges, with increasing reports of physical threats and intimidation. Given that Kloop remains at the forefront of high-risk investigations, the return of our exiled staff would be a direct danger to their safety and freedom, exposing them to arbitrary detention, torture, or politically motivated trials.

26. Our local journalists in Kyrgyzstan also face increased security risks from the freeze on NED's funding of our organization. Journalists still inside Kyrgyzstan face heightened risks as the government tightens its crackdown on independent media. With fewer staff and resources, it becomes harder to implement security protocols, putting local journalists at greater risk of harassment, surveillance, and potential arrests.

27. Finally, Kloop itself now faces significant threats to our survival.

28. Investigative journalism requires secure digital infrastructure to protect sources, documents, and sensitive communications. If we cannot maintain secure cloud storage and digital security tools, our team may become vulnerable to hacking attempts, leaks, and government interception.

29. If our journalists in exile can no longer work, Kloop's ability to conduct large-scale investigations into corruption and kleptocracy will collapse. Many of these journalists are among the most experienced members of our team, and losing them would set our investigative work back years.

30. If we do not secure new funding before April 2025, we face the potential shutdown of our investigative unit. This would be a major loss for independent journalism in Kyrgyzstan, as Kloop is one of the only outlets still conducting deep investigative work on corruption, kleptocracy, and state repression.

31. We may also have to pause or significantly scale down our investigative video production. This is among our most resource-intensive and high-risk aspects of our work, and without financial support, we will lose the capacity to conduct in-depth investigations and produce impactful visual storytelling.

32. We may also lose key management staff, including those responsible for overseeing Kloop's international collaborations, ensuring financial stability, developing new projects, and securing new revenue sources. Without these roles, Kloop's ability to adapt, secure funding, and sustain operations will be significantly weakened.

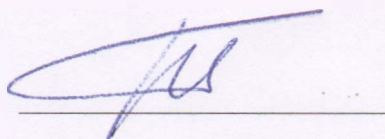
33. Our ability to operate outside Kyrgyzstan will also be compromised. This would weaken our international advocacy efforts, which are crucial for bringing attention to press freedom violations in Kyrgyzstan.

34. Our journalism training program, which has trained hundreds of young journalists, will be at risk of shutting down. This could result in a "lost generation" of independent journalists, as self-censorship and government pressure make it impossible to learn high-quality journalism inside Kyrgyzstan.

35. All of these impacts could lead to a major operational collapse. If we cannot replace lost funding and fail to generate new revenue streams, Kloop may have to shut down some of its core investigative operations by April 2025. If no funding is secured at all, Kloop as a functioning investigative media outlet could cease to exist by the end of 2025.

I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the United States of America that the foregoing is true and correct.

Executed on the 2nd of March 2025.



Rinat Tuhvatshin
President
Fundacja Kloop Media Polska